

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, HO, ES

SUBJECT: HONDURAS-SALVADOR DISPUTE: COMMITTEE OF SEVEN
MEETS

1. THE OAS COMMITTEE OF SEVEN MET DECEMBER 19 TO HEAR A REPORT BY SALVADOR'S GALINDO POHL ON THE MEXICO TALKS BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS. GALINDO POHL, FLANKED BY ADVISERS ROBERTO CASTRILLO HIDALGO AND COL. JOSE N. AGREDA, GAVE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF EL SALVADOR'S POSITION, AS WELL AS VIEWS ON THE REASONS FOR THE CURRENT IMPASSE IN THE TALKS. ARGENTINA (QUIJANO) CHAIRED THE COMMITTEE IN THE ABSENCE OF SEVILLA SACASA.

2. GALINDO SAID THE TALKS EFFECTIVELY ENDED ON DECEMBER

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10, WHEN HONDURAS DECLARED THAT THE CONTINUATION OF THE

TALKS DEPENDED ON DEALING IMMEDIATELY WITH THE BORDER QUESTION. (A MEETING ON DECEMBER 14 WAS HELD TO AGREE ON THE TEXT OF A PRESS RELEASE.) HE SAID THE SALVADOREAN NEGOTIATORS CAME TO THE MEETING ON THE 10TH WITH A DRAFT TREATY AND A WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH ALL ASPECTS OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES. HE WENT INTO SOME DETAIL IN DESCRIBING THE PROCEDURAL DIFFERENCES WHICH LED TO THE FAILURE OF THE MEETING, BUT SAID THAT FUNDAMENTALLY THE FOLLOWING QUESTION DIVIDED THE TWO SIDES: HONDURAS WANTED TO GO AHEAD WITH CONSIDERATION OF THE BOUNDARY QUESTION RIGHT AWAY; EL SALVADOR WANTED TO DEAL WITH GENERAL QUESTIONS AND OTHER DIFFERENCES AT THE SAME TIME AS THE BOUNDARIES.

3. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION BY QUIJANO, GALINDO NOTED THAT THE ACT OF WASHINGTON PROVIDES FOR A POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINES SET BY THE SAME DOCUMENT. BUT HE SAID THAT RESUMPTION OF THE TALKS BEFORE APRIL WOULD BE QTE VERY DIFFICULT UNQTE FOR EL SALVADOR. HE CITED INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS CONNECTED WITH THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO A U.S. QUESTION, HE SAID THAT WHILE EL SALVADOR COULD NOT REQUEST CONTINUATION OF THE TALKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, IT COULD ACCEPT CONTINUATION OF TALKS PRIOR TO THE ELECTIONS, PROVIDED 1) THAT CONTINUATION WAS SUGGESTED BY THIRD PARTIES, 2) THAT THE TALKS WERE CARRIED OUT IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, AND 3) THAT THE TALKS BE INFORMAL IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

4. GALINDO REITERATED EL SALVADOR'S POSITION THAT THE ONLY WAY TO OBTAIN A STABLE SETTLEMENT WAS THROUGH DIRECT BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE EL SALVADOR'S POSITION ON THAT IS QTE WELL DEFINED UNQTE, HE SAID HE WOULD NOT DEFINITELY CLOSE THE DOOR TO OTHER TYPES OF SOLUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE, THOUGH THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE VOLUNTARY AND HAVE THE BACKING OF THE PEOPLE OF BOTH COUNTRIES.

5. GALINDO WAS ASKED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF EL SALVADOR'S DENUNCIATION OF THE PACT OF BOGOTA ON THE NEGOTIATIONS. HIS REPLY WAS LONG AND DEFENSIVE. HE SAID EL SALVADOR, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXERCISING ITS SOVEREIGNTY, HAD MERELY PLACED ITSELF IN THE POSITION OF THE HEMISPHERE'S NON-SIGNATORIES. WITH RESPECT TO THE HONDURAS NOTE OF DECEMBER 7, GALINDO SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE OAS HAD ANY JURIDICAL BASIS FOR ATTEMPTING TO INTERPRET THE PACT. IN ANY EVENT, HE SAID, BATRES MISINTERPRETED EL SALVADOR'S DENUNCIATION; EL SALVADOR HAD NOT INTENDED TO SAY THAT EL SALVADOR WAS OUT OF THE PACT AS OF THE DATE OF THE DENUNCIATION; EL

SALVADOR HAD ONLY MEANT THAT ITS DENUNCIATION WAS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. (HE THUS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT EL SALVADOR'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE PACT EXPIRES ONLY A YEAR AFTER DENUNCIATION, AS PROVIDED IN THE PACT.) GALINDO TOOK HONDURAS TO TASK FOR SUSPENDING THE APPLICABILITY OF ALL THE INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS BINDING THE TWO COUNTRIES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CASTIGATING EL SALVADOR FOR DENOUNCING ONLY ONE.

6. FOLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF THE SALVADOREAN CONTINGENT FROM THE MEETING, THE COMMITTEE:

1) INSTRUCTED THE ACTING CHAIRMAN, QUIJANO, TO CABLE GOMEZ ROBLEDO, THE COORDINATOR IN MEXICO, TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS ANY CHANCE OF EXTENDING THE DEADLINES SET IN THE ACT OF WASHINGTON. (ACCORDING TO PARA II (G) THE DEADLINES MAY BE CHANGED BY AGREEMENT OF EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS, THROUGH THE COORDINATOR.)

2) AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE U.S., INSTRUCTED THE ACTING CHAIRMAN TO CONTACT THE HONDURAN AMBASSADOR TO THE OAS AND GIVE HIM A VERY BRIEF AND VAGUE RESUME OF THE REPORT BY GALINDO POHL AND OFFER HONDURAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE A SIMILAR REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE.

7. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE IT IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM TOWARDS A SOLUTION THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS (FORMAL OR INFORMAL; OPEN OR QTE SECRET UNQTE). IF GOMEZ ROBLEDO CANNOT GET AGREEMENT, WHICH WE CONSIDER LIKELY, WE WILL WORK THROUGH COMMITTEE OF SEVEN TO KEEP PRESSURE ON FOR BILATERAL NEGOTIAIONS, MEANWHILE EXAMINING SUPPORT WE MIGHT GIVE TO INITIATIVES SUCH AS THOSE BEING PROPOSED BY ARANA OR SOMOZA. KISSINGER
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